

Mr. Speaker, if we have already reached an agreement about the necessity of protecting the Social Security and Medicare surpluses and if there are obvious improvements that could be made to this bill, why is the Republican Leadership rushing this bill through the House?

The answer is obvious. When the Republican Leadership brings the President's tax cut to the House floor later this year, it wants to be able to claim that "Republicans protected Social Security and Medicare," regardless of the price tag for that tax cut and regardless of how much it drained away resources needed for other priorities.

It is one thing to claim that you have protected Social Security and Medicare, but it is quite another to actually do it. Despite the assertions that Republicans make about this bill, the President's tax plan could easily dip into the Social Security and Medicare surpluses. All it would take is for the Rules Committee to waive the points of order contained in this bill.

Indeed, it is not Democrats here in the House who need to be persuaded about setting aside Social Security and Medicare surpluses. Democrats here in the House voted in favor of a Social Security and Medicare lock box in overwhelming numbers in the last Congress and will vote in favor of one again today.

The people who need to be persuaded about setting aside Social Security and Medicare surpluses are Republicans, both in the other body and in the White House.

Mr. Speaker, even President Bush's chief economic advisor, Larry Lindsey, when asked whether the government should dip into the Social Security surplus to make room for tax cuts that he thinks might stimulate the economy, responded: "It's a question that needs to be asked," and OMB Director Mitch Daniels, when asked whether Medicare should get the same protection in terms of its surplus as Social Security, said: "I don't agree . . . We could allow the concept of a Medicare surplus which exists in Part A, but not en toto, to obscure the need for real reform to which this administration will be committed as a fairly early priority. So for that reason I would be very hesitant to treat those funds in the same way as we do Social Security where I think it's quite in order."

Furthermore, according to a Wall Street Journal article from February 5, 2001, "The Bush administration also won't wall off Medicare's current surpluses in a 'lockbox' . . . In fact, Mr. Daniels said he has told his staff not to talk about a Medicare surplus."

In addition, according to BNA's Daily Report for Executives (February 7, 2001), Senate Majority Leader TRENT LOTT has yet to make a commitment to a Medicare lock-box, suggesting "We're going to think that through" before deciding whether to back the Medicare lockbox measure . . ."

Mr. Speaker, Democrats strongly support setting aside the Social Security and Medicare surpluses, but we also understand that doing that alone is not enough. Both programs need more resources. Unfortunately, once the President's tax plan moves through Congress, it will likely consume all available budget surpluses.

We can not afford to squander the opportunity that budget surpluses provide. Demo-

crats favor a tax cut, but one that is enacted within a fiscally responsible framework. Tax cuts should leave room for priorities like debt reduction, education, transportation, a bipartisan program for defense, and strengthening Social Security and Medicare, including the addition of coverage for medicines. We can not afford to completely drain budget surpluses to finance an enormous tax cut, instead of using them to address the challenges that the nation faces.

CELEBRATING STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

HON. JIM LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I wish today to congratulate several young students from my district who have achieved national recognition for performing outstanding volunteer service in their communities. Rochelle Cotton of East Greenwich and Michelle Wheelock of North Kingstown have been named as my state's top honorees, and Claire Berman of North Kingstown is a state finalist in the 2001 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program. This is an annual honor that is conferred on the most impressive student volunteers around the country.

Miss Cotton is a junior at East Greenwich High School and was recognized for founding the Rhode Island Student Alliance. This student-run non-profit organization identifies issues that affect teenagers in the community and attempts to find solutions. Miss Cotton expanded the program to the entire state, personally presenting her idea to the principals of each high school. Representatives from every school in Rhode Island now meet monthly to work on a variety of projects, such as curbing youth violence and creating an advice book for high school freshmen. Miss Cotton is pleased that students can now come together for co-operation rather than competition.

Miss Wheelock is currently in the seventh grade at Wickford Middle School. She was honored for her work with seniors at a local nursing home. Motivated by the opportunity to "brighten up the day of every resident I met," Miss Wheelock never tires of trying to improve the lives of her new friends. Throughout her service with seniors, she always strives to understand what they are going through and listen to their concerns. Miss Wheelock plans to continue volunteering at the nursing home for as long as she can, sharing her happiness with her new friends.

Miss Berman is a junior at North Kingstown High School, who was instrumental in the collection of more than 840 cans of food for the North Kingstown Food Pantry. She accomplished this by organizing a competition where students competed to construct four-foot "Empire State Buildings" out of canned goods that were then donated to the pantry.

These three students are examples for all our young people. Given the growing trend of Americans being less involved in community activity than they once were, it is important to encourage the kind of dedicated service

shown by these three young women. They are inspiring role models for us all.

Miss Cotton, Miss Wheelock and Miss Berman should be extremely proud to be chosen for this honor out of a group of such motivated volunteers. I would like to honor these young citizens for their initiative in bettering their communities. They are truly extraordinary in their level of commitment, and they deserve the admiration and respect of us all.

Mr. Speaker, I hope you and our colleagues will join me in congratulating these students, along with all of the Prudential Spirit of Community awardees throughout the country.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TEACHER TAX CREDIT ACT

HON. ROBERT C. SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the bipartisan "Teacher Tax Credit Act" which gives a \$1,000 tax credit to eligible public school teachers to defray qualified costs for classroom expenses, professional development expenses, and interest paid on certain education loans. A similar bill, S. 225, has been introduced in the Senate by my Virginia colleague Senator JOHN WARNER.

I think that most people would agree that America's teachers did not enter the profession because they thought that the pay would be good. They teach for far more altruistic reasons: to educate our children and make a lasting difference in their lives. I'm sure that every one of us can remember at least one teacher who changed our lives for the better.

Despite the important role that teachers play in our children's lives, elementary and secondary school teachers remain underpaid, overworked, and all too often underappreciated. Many teachers spend significant amounts of their own money on expenses that improve our children's education, both directly and indirectly. Teachers often spend their own money to buy learning materials for their classrooms such as books, supplies, pens, paper, and even computer equipment. They also have professional development expenses that indirectly benefit our children by insuring that they will be taught by qualified, competent people who know the latest teaching techniques.

All of these expenses benefit students in the classroom either through better classroom materials or through better teachers, and that which benefits America's students benefits all of us. Why do our teachers have to spend their own money on things that benefit all of us? Simply put, because current school budgets are not adequate to meet the costs of educating our children. Our teachers have stepped in to fill the gap with their own money.

Current tax law provides that teachers can deduct some of these expenses. There are several impediments to using this deduction, however, that result in few teachers actually realizing any benefit: teachers must itemize their returns, classroom and professional development deductions have to exceed 2 percent of their incomes, and student loan interest is deductible only for the first 60 months

after graduation and is subject to an income phase-out.

In order to better help teachers defray these costs, I am introducing this bill with my good friend and Virginia colleague, Senator JOHN WARNER, who is the primary sponsor for this legislation in the Senate. Our bill would ensure that qualifying teachers would not have to itemize their deductions or exceed the 2 percent floor to receive the credit. Teachers would not be phased out of the student loan interest benefit based on income level, and there would be no 60 month limitation.

We all agree that our education system must leave no child behind. As we try to achieve this goal through strengthening and reforming our educational system, we must keep in mind their most important component—the teachers.

RECOGNIZING THE 5TH ANNUAL FAST OF REVEREND RONALD I. SCHUPP ON TIBETAN NATIONAL DAY, 2001

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I wish today to inform my colleagues that on March 10, 2001, which is Tibetan National Day, one of my constituents, Reverend Ronald I. Schupp will begin his fifth annual 24-hour fast to call attention to China's occupation of Tibet. Reverend Schupp will be sending a message to the People's Republic of China to free Tibet and allow for displaced Tibetans to return to their homeland.

The 14th Dalai Lama was forced to leave Tibet in 1959 and is still working for a just outcome to China's occupation of Tibet. In 1989, the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his ongoing efforts to focus attention on this subject.

I respect the efforts of Reverend Schupp and wish him well in his efforts on behalf of the people of Tibet.

181ST ANNIVERSARY OF SUSAN B. ANTHONY

HON. JO ANN DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mrs. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring attention to and commemorate tomorrow's 181st anniversary of the birth of Susan B. Anthony. This anniversary is a good time to remember her lifelong work for women's rights, her opposition to slavery, and work that changed the course of this nation. And it is a good time to remember, or perhaps, recover, another very important aspect of her legacy in promoting equal rights for all. I refer to Susan B. Anthony's pro-life legacy in calling for equal rights for both women and their unborn children.

In fact, Susan B. Anthony considered opposition to abortions as part and parcel of her

work to promote women's rights. Anthony branded abortion, "child murder," and believed women turned to it only because of their treatment as second class citizens. She called for "prevention, not punishment," for the abortion problem of her day, and believed the best way to prevent abortion was to promote the dignity and equality of women.

More than a century later, "prevention, not punishment" remains a sound strategy for all those who would promote the rights of both women and unborn children.

OSTEOPOROSIS FEDERAL EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFITS STANDARDIZATION ACT

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Osteoporosis Federal Employee Health Benefits Standardization Act of 2001. This much needed legislation will provide the same consistency of osteoporosis coverage for our Federal employees and retirees as Congress approved for Medicare in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997.

Instead of a comprehensive national coverage policy, FEHBP leaves it to each of the over 350 participating plans to decide who is eligible to receive a bone mass measurement and what constitutes medical necessity. A survey of the 19 top plans participating in FEHBP indicate that many plans have no specific rules to guide reimbursement and instead cover the tests on a case-by-case basis. Several plans refuse to provide consumers information indicating when the plan covers the test and when it does not. Some plans cover the test only for people who already have osteoporosis. All individuals, whether they work in the public sector or private sector, should have health insurance coverage for osteoporosis screening because this affliction is so widespread but more importantly, because it is preventable when discovered early.

Osteoporosis is a major public health problem affecting 28 million Americans, who either have the disease or are at risk due to low bone mass; eighty percent are women. The disease causes 1.5 million fractures annually at a cost of \$13.8 billion (\$38 million per day) in direct medical expenses, and osteoporotic fractures cost the Medicare program 3 percent of its overall costs. In their lifetimes, one in two women and one in eight men over the age of 50 will fracture a bone due to osteoporosis. A woman's risk of a hip fracture is equal to her combined risk of contracting breast, uterine, and ovarian cancer.

Osteoporosis is largely preventable and thousands of fractures could be avoided if low bone mass was detected early and treated. We now have drugs that promise to reduce fractures by 50 percent. However, identification of risk factors alone cannot predict how much bone a person has and how strong bone is. Experts estimate that without bone density tests, up to 40 percent of women with low bone mass could be missed.

It is my hope that by making bone mass measurements available under the FEHBP,

we can minimize the deleterious effects of osteoporosis and improve the lives of our Federal employees and retirees.

AMERICAN HEART MONTH

HON. JOHN F. TIERNEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in recognizing February as American Heart Month and in commending the 22.5 million volunteers and supporters committed to combating heart disease. Clearly, all citizens should "Be Prepared for Cardiac Emergencies. Know the signs of cardiac arrest. Call 9-1-1 immediately. Give CPR."

Paralysis, weakness, decreased sensation, numbness, tingling, decreased vision, slurred speech or the inability to speak, loss of memory and physical coordination, difficulty swallowing, lack of bladder control, mental capacity declines, mood changes, dysfunctional, uncontrollable, and unpredictable movement, shortness or loss of breath, fainting, and fatigue are all signs associated with cardiac arrest.

Immediate response to signs of cardiac arrest is imperative as seconds and minutes make the difference between life, the quality of life, and death. Every 29 seconds, someone in America suffers a heart attack, and every 60 seconds someone dies as a result of the same. While we have the luxury of emergency ambulatory responses as a result of 9-1-1, if we act while waiting on trained professionals to arrive, we can make a meaningful difference. For this reason, we should all encourage broader knowledge of CPR.

As medical professionals have said, when the heart is under attack, blood is not flowing to parts of the body, such as the brain, that solely rely on it for functioning, and permanent damage to the brain can occur if blood flow is not restored within four minutes. As a result, if life is sustained, the quality of life may be significantly diminished as irreversible harm often takes place. I am hopeful that those who have regular contact with loved ones at risk will be trained in CPR.

I applaud the American Heart Association and other organizations nationwide that educate and train all of us to be properly prepared for cardiac arrest by providing education that informs us about the causes and signs of heart disease and the skills necessary to react to these unfortunate episodes when they occur. Also, I thank my colleagues for pausing to recognize these organizations for their ongoing efforts in this vital area.

IN SUPPORT OF THE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' HEALTH ACT

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Law Enforcement Officers' Health